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Association of State Wetland Managers 2010 Annual Report

Association of State Wetland Managers

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Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc.

Annual Report 2010





Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

Contents:

ASWM's Mission
Our Goals
Welcome Letter
2010 Highlights
Financial Reports
Board of Directors
Staff



The Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) is a nonprofit membership organization established in 1983 to promote and enhance protection and management of wetland resources, to promote application of sound science to wetland management efforts and to provide training and education for our members and the public. Membership is open to anyone who is involved with wetland resources. Our goals are outlined below.

- Help states develop and implement wetland regulatory and management programs
- Improve the coordination of wetland programs and policies at all levels of government
- Provide training and capacity building for state wetland programs
- Facilitate the integration of wetlands into water resources and watershed management
- Build conservation and restoration partnerships among states, tribes, local governments, nonprofits and other interested parties
- Translate wetland science into fair and reasonable government policies
- Encourage minority participation in wetland protection, restoration and management
- Integrate wetlands into broader landscape and resource management initiatives.



Dear Reader,

The Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc. was created because states wanted to talk to other states to find out how to improve wetland programs. Twenty-eight years later much has been accomplished. Annual net wetland losses have decreased from 500,000 acres a year to 0. That alone is an enormous accomplishment. This success has been due to the efforts of many—government agencies, nonprofit organizations, businesses and private citizens. But we're still talking because wetlands are so much more than numbers. These remarkable areas are important to manage because they help to maintain wildlife, provide clean water and protect people from floods and hurricanes. State wetland programs now encompass permitting, restoration, mapping, monitoring and wetland water quality standards. The tools, the science, and the public's support for protecting wetland resources has grown well beyond the imagination of participants during the first meeting of the Association of State Wetland Managers in 1983. We hope to keep learning from each other so we can improve the health and sustainability of our nation's wetlands.

This past year has been a successful year for ASWM. In a tough economy ASWM was able to secure funding which enabled a move to new offices with space to add interns to our staff. In 2010 we were able to embark on several projects to provide our members, and the wetlands community at large with improved services. This included a total overhaul of ASWM's website to improve the accessibility of information. Projects to build state program capacity were pursued in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ASWM worked with the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service to develop the first online wetland mapping training program. These and other projects will yield benefits for many years to come. We are deeply grateful to our members, partners and funders who have made this possible.

From the beginning ASWM has been committed to fostering communication, building scientific knowledge and supporting programs designed to protect, conserve and manage wetlands. We strive to provide balanced forums that welcome all viewpoints, to encourage organizations to work together and to use the best information available. These core principles are ASWM's touchstone. They have served us well in the past and they will continue to do so in the future.

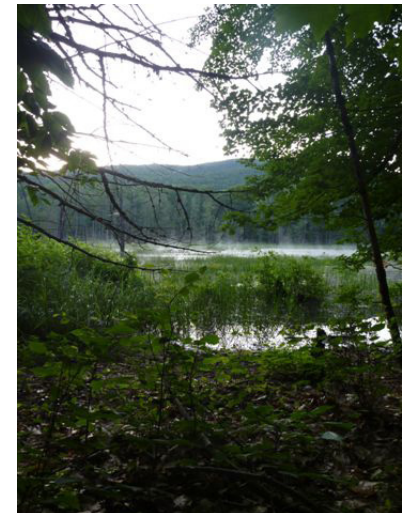
Sincerely,



Jeanne Christie, Executive Director



Jeanne Christie and Jon Kusler





2010 Highlights

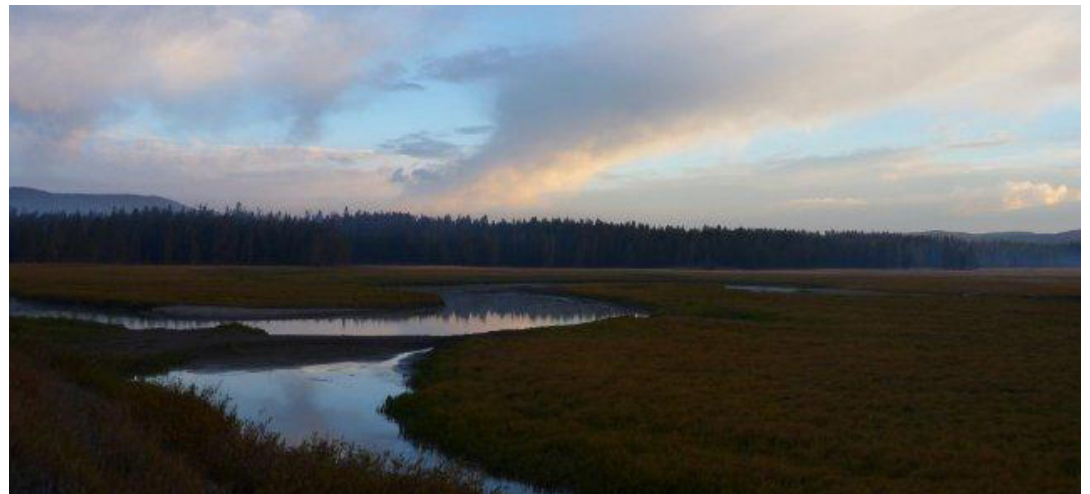
A Year of Progress and Success

In 2010 ASWM worked actively with states, interest groups and federal agencies developing tools to assist states in building capacity to improve state wetland programs. These included projects directed to 1) improve wetland permitting, 2) increase application of 401 certification, 3) assist states in complying with in-lieu fee requirements of the federal mitigation rule, 4) summarize state actions addressing impacts of climate change on wetlands and 5) improve protection of natural resources in the floodplain. ASWM partnered with the Environmental Council of States (ECOS) to develop materials to clarify the Clean Water Act Section 404 State/Tribal Assumption process. ASWM partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop online wetland mapping training materials and also facilitated activities to improve understanding of technical issues associated with wetland mapping through the Wetland Mapping Consortium. The Association of State Wetland Managers hired two interns, Shelley Hodges and William Walker III, from the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service in 2010 to help with several of these projects.

Throughout the year, the Association responded to critical wetlands issues that emerged. These included writing letters in support of the Clean Water Restoration Act (CWRA), posting up-to-date information on a new Gulf oil spill webpage and requesting that EPA provide clarification on the Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation requirements for state assumption of the Section 404 program. ASWM successfully nominated 2010 National Wetlands Award winner Michael Cain from Wisconsin. Executive Director Jeanne Christie was a plenary speaker at the 2010 Gilbert F. White National Floodplain Policy forum in Washington, D.C. ASWM also worked with Glenn Barnes of University of North Carolina and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on a project to summarize state wetland permitting fees for Section 401 and dredge & fill permitting programs. The Association continued to provide its members and readers with regular issues of "Wetland Breaking News," "Insider's Edition," "Wetland News," and weekly posts on the blog, "The Compleat Wetlander." In the last few months of 2010, staff sought feedback from members on ways to improve its website and blog, in anticipation of reorganizing the aswm.org website to improve the ease of accessing useful wetlands information.

In 2010 ASWM projects were supported by the McKnight Foundation, the Orchard Foundation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey, along with members and private donors.

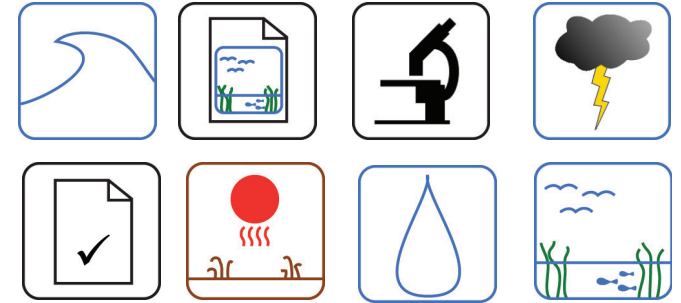
The Association would like to express its gratitude to those who have supported its efforts to protect the nation's wetlands through the application of sound science, training and education. Thank you.





Climate Change: Assessing States' Adaptation Plans, Impacts to Wetlands

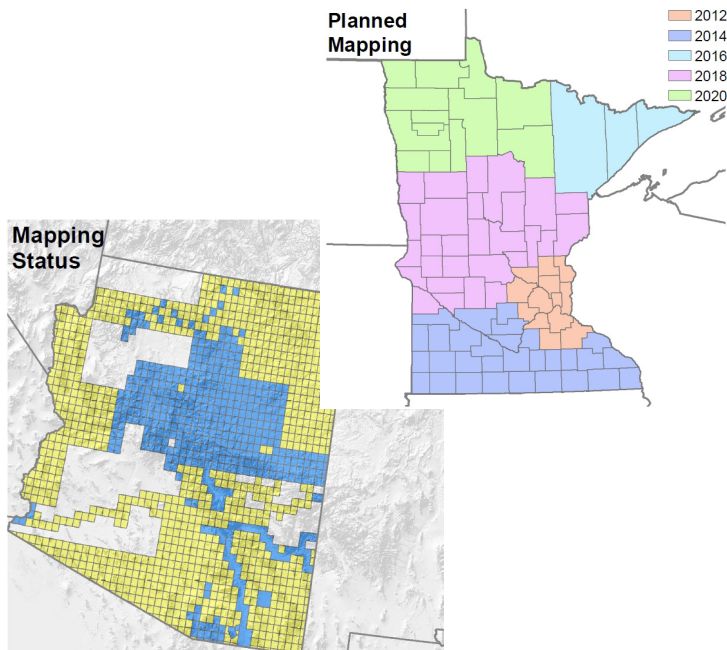
Although the battle to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is ongoing, a shift in focus to adaptation strategies for natural resources has become increasingly important. ASWM investigated what actions states have taken to prepare their wetlands management programs for climate change impacts. ASWM accomplished this by querying states and conducting Internet research to gather and catalog the various activities of each state. The symbols in the upper-right corner represent climate change impacts that states identified, such as sea level rise, drought, natural hazards (hurricanes) as well as other concerns, including wildlife habitat; other symbols indicate actions undertaken by states. The information has been summarized and made available on ASWM's website. The summaries are intended to be "living documents" that can be updated whenever new information is available.



Will Walker, ASWM's summer intern, conducted research on climate change and state wetland mapping status in 2010

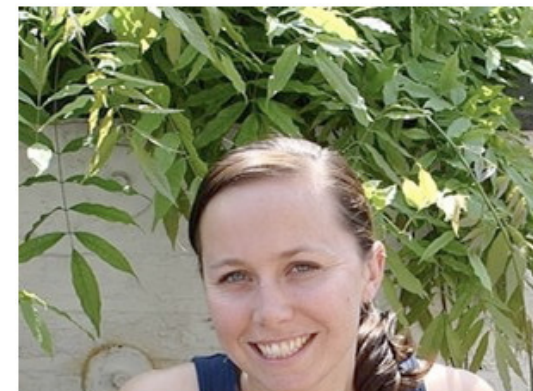
State Wetland Mapping Status: A Snapshot of States' Wetland Mapping (including planned mapping)

Without answering the basic question, "Where are the wetlands?" it is impossible to effectively manage, protect or restore them. In partnership with the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), ASWM inquired with each state to confirm that the NWI reflected the most current information, as well as to identify any new wetland mapping projects underway that had not yet been submitted to NWI. ASWM compiled this information into a single-sheet snapshot of the status of wetland mapping on a state-by-state basis. These wetland mapping status summaries are available on the ASWM website.



In-lieu Fee Project

The In-Lieu Fee Program Workgroup is a special project supported by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In 2006 the Corps and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published a mitigation rule with new requirements for mitigation of permitted dredge and fill activities in waters of the U.S. The purpose of the project is to help states make necessary changes to pre-existing In-Lieu Fee programs to bring them into compliance with the new rule. In addition there are several states currently in the process of developing new In-Lieu Fee programs. The project is carried out through a national workgroup of states, Corps headquarters and district staff, and other interested parties. The workgroup holds monthly conference calls on how states have successfully met the requirements of specific parts of the rule, such as developing a compensation planning framework, establishing credits, identifying appropriate geographic service areas and allocating funds in a timely manner.

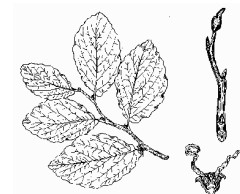


Shelley Hodges, ASWM's summer intern, conducted research on states' in-lieu fee programs and 401 certification capacity building



401 Certification Capacity Building

The 401 Certification Capacity Building Project is a three-part project supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. EPA supported the development of case studies about 10 state programs and hosted a series of 401 certification capacity building conference calls through December of 2010. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is supporting communication and information sharing in preparation for the reissuance of the Section 404 Nationwide Permits, which will occur following publication of a proposed and final rule and go into effect in March of 2012.



ASWM Around the Nation: Workshops & Conferences

ASWM State/Federal Coordination Workshop was held on February 23-25, 2010 in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The state/federal coordination workshop organized by the Association of State Wetland Managers covered important revisions in federal and state wetland policy. Topics included the new Federal Geographic Data Committee wetlands mapping standard, opportunities for streamlining permitting, discussion on Clean Water Act jurisdiction and opportunities for strengthening the states' role in implementing the Clean Water Act. There were approximately 90 speakers and participants.



ASWM State/Federal Coordination Workshop in 2010



Leah Stetson

ASWM Staff Goes West...to River Rally in May 2010
Wetland Breaking News Editor, Leah Stetson, attended the River Network's annual River Rally 2010 in Snowbird, Utah. This allowed ASWM to have a presence at the national conference and in workshops on Clean Water Act jurisdiction issues and 401 Certification. Leah also joined birders on a field trip to the Legacy Nature Reserve near Great Salt Lake, where she saw 60 species of birds, such as the American avoset (left), and learned about the wetlands management at the preserve.



Resources for Wetland Managers on State Legislators by Leah Stetson, Wetland News - December 2010

This led to the development of a new *I am a Legislator* section on the current website and is part of an ongoing project.

Expanding the State's Role in Implementing CWA Section 404 Assumption by Leah Stetson, with an introduction by Jeanne Christie, November 2010 - This revised document expanded on an earlier draft, which was originally published in Wetland News.

A Snapshot of State and Federal Wetland Mapping in 2010 by William Walker, ASWM, Wetland News - October/November 2010

This interim report detailed the wetland mapping status project to date. The full project will be posted to the website in spring 2011.

Wetlands in the Spotlight: 10 East Steps! by Leah Stetson, Wetland News - August 2010

This article described Wisconsin Wetlands Association's "Wetland Gems" program and the Maine Natural Heritage Program's Natural Landscapes of Maine book, two examples of regional programs that identify valuable wetland habitat. The guide is posted on the *I am a Concerned Citizen* webpage.

Implementation and Training Program Development for Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) National Standards for the Mapping and Classification of Wetlands by Jane Awl, ASWM; Bill Wilen, FWS; JoAnn Mills, FWS; Elaine Blok, FWS; Larry Handley, USGS; Margarete Heber, EPA; Jeanne Christie, ASWM; John Galbraith, VTI; and Megan Lang, USDA. Originally presented at a Society of Wetland Scientists Annual Meeting in 2010. - A new FGDC standard for mapping wetlands was accepted in July 2009. A dynamic implementation plan for this mapping standard was released in January 2010. The presentation is available on ASWM's wetland mapping webpage.

Preserved Habitat for Birds in Utah, Birds in Maine by Leah Stetson, Wetland News - June 2010. This is a feature available to members in archived issues.

How Wetlands Differ from Traditional Waters; What this Means to Wetland Water Quality Standards by Jon Kusler, Esq. Ph.D. - June 2010

This report was prepared as a series on water quality standards for wetlands for the State of Maryland. It is now posted with additional web materials on a new water quality standards for wetlands webpage on the current website.

Implications and Management Options for Wetlands that Fail to Meet "Designated Use" Criteria by Jon Kusler, Esq. Ph.D. - June 2010

This report was prepared as a series on water quality standards for wetlands for the State of Maryland. It is on the current website.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs) and Wetlands by Jon Kusler, Esq. Ph.D. - June 2010

This report was part of a series on water quality standards for wetlands for the State of Maryland. It is posted on the Water Quality Standards webpage.

State Water Quality Standards for Wetlands by Jon Kusler, Esq. Ph.D. - June 2010

This report was prepared as part of a series for the State of Maryland. It is posted on the Water Quality Standards webpage at aswm.org.

Sustainable Financing for State & Tribal Wetland Programs by Leah Stetson, Wetland News - March/April 2010

This article summarized the tools and resources covered in an EPA session on wetland program financing in March 2010 and led to a related webpage.

Improving Wetland Permitting in 7 Categories by Leah Stetson, Wetland News - February 2010.

This interim report detailed the major ways in which state wetland programs improve their permitting programs as identified by an ASWM task force.

Financial Reports 2010

INCOME

Contributions (Public Support)	381,138.00
Program Income	18,753.00
Membership Dues	16,715.00
Interest Income	658.00
Reimbursed Expenses	6,362.00
Non Cash	4,170.00

TOTAL INCOME **427,796.00**

EXPENSE

Labor (personnel)	212,006.00
Non-Labor	
Commercial Insurance	1,772.00
Non-employee compensation	47,244.00
Office Computers (IT)	4,750.00
General Office	23,982.00
Program Expense	18,890.00
Travel Expense	14,352.00
Miscellaneous	4,932.00
Cost Share	4,170.00
Total Non-Labor	115,923.00

TOTAL EXPENSE **332,098.00**

NET INCOME **95,698.00**

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	218,982.00
Accounts Receivable	51,742.00
Other Current Assets	167.00

Total Current Assets **270,892.00**

TOTAL ASSETS **270,892.00**

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Total Accounts Payable	19,216.00
Other Current Liabilities	5,374.00

Total Liabilities **24,590.00**

Equity

Retained Earnings	150,604.00
Net Income	95,698.00

Total Equity **246,302.00**

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY **270,892.00**



Board of Directors



David Davis, Chairman

Dave is the Director of the Office of Wetlands & Water Protection at the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. In this position, he is responsible for Virginia's independent nontidal wetland regulatory program and non-regulatory wetland programs. He is also a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists. In his spare time, Dave plays bass trombone. A native of Chincoteague Island, Virginia, Dave has resided in Richmond since 1990, is married, and has a precocious daughter who is in the "but why, Daddy" stage.

Alan Quackenbush, Vice Chair

Alan runs the Wetland Program for the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Originally from central New York, Alan had an early affinity for wetlands that were prevalent on the farm where he grew up. Alan served as a member-at-large on the board of the Association of State Wetland Managers; is a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists; is on EPA's National Wetland Condition Assessment Workgroup and New England Wetland Workgroup for monitoring and assessment. He lives in the Green Mountains, just a few miles from work, with his wife Audrey and his dog, Sadie.

Cherie Hagen, Secretary/Treasurer

Cherie is the Wetland Team Leader and Policy Coordinator for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), where she collaborates with more than 17 partner organizations on the development and implementation of *Reversing the Loss - A Strategy to Protect, Restore and Explore Wisconsin Wetlands*. She has worked for WDNR since 1995. She holds degrees in Biological Sciences, Aquatic Ecology and Secondary Education.

Members at Large

Richard Gitar, Fond du Lac Reservation

Rick is a Water Regulatory Specialist for the Fond du Lac Reservation - Office of Water Protection (located in Northeastern Minnesota). Rick was a recipient of a 2009 National Wetlands Award from the Environmental Law Institute. In his spare time, Rick enjoys camping, fishing, bicycle touring, canoeing, trail building (for the Superior Hiking Trail system), or just spending time at home with his wife, two children, two dogs, two cats and three birds in Duluth, Minnesota.

Maryann McGraw, New Mexico Environment Department

Maryann is the Wetlands Program Coordinator and the Wetlands and Department of Transportation Team Leader with the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) Surface Water Quality Bureau. Maryann brings to the ASWM board the perspective and challenges of a newly formed and growing wetlands program. Maryann paints en plein air in pastel, concentrating on New Mexico's scenic vistas and how time and seasonal changes affect those places.

Collis Adams, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

Collis has served as the administrator of the Wetlands Bureau at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services for the past eight years. As the administrator, he oversees all activities relative to the New Hampshire Dredge and Fill Law and the Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act. His greatest accomplishment as administrator of the wetlands bureau was the implementation of an in-lieu fee program for wetland mitigation and then expanding that program to include streams, rivers, and their riparian habitats. Collis holds a BSCE degree from the University of Massachusetts with an emphasis on environmental engineering. He has two children, one of each, and is proud that he has instilled in them his same sense of volunteerism and a love for the outdoors. He is seldom seen without his dog and best friend Zoë at his side.

Janet Morlan, Oregon Department of State Lands

Janet is the Wetlands Program Manager at the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL). DSL implements the state's Removal-Fill Law and the 1989 Wetlands Conservation Act. Janet joined DSL in 1989 as the Wetlands Inventory Specialist and became the Wetlands Team Leader/Program Manager in 1997. Janet's responsibilities include development of state wetlands policy and programs, coordinating state interests with federal programs, rulemaking, working with cities engaged in wetlands planning, and providing wetland-related education and training. Janet received a B.A. in geography (with minors in wildlife management and journalism) from Humboldt State University and obtained her M.S. degree in resource geography from Oregon State University. Janet is also active with the Society of Wetland Scientists. For fun, Janet enjoys exercise, gardening, and competing in canine musical freestyle with her Belgian Tervuren, Kobe.

Peg Bostwick, Past Chair

Peg was Chief of the Wetland Lakes and Streams Unit in the Water Resources Division for the State of Michigan – Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Peg joined the (then) DNR in 1979 after completing a B.S. in fisheries and wildlife and additional graduate work in limnology at Michigan State University. With over 30 years of experience, Peg is also a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists, the Michigan Chapter of the North American Lake Management Society, and the Jacob Sheep Breeders Association. Peg lives with her family on a 40 acre farm near St. Johns, Michigan, where they raise Jacob sheep – an old heritage wool breed.

Staff

Jeanne Christie, Executive Director, Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc. (ASWM).

Jeanne has been with ASWM since 1999 and Executive Director since 2001. From 1995 to 1999 she was a Resource Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wetlands and Watersheds Division where she was national program leader for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. She worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wetlands Division (1988-1995) moving from the staff level to Section Chief and Acting Branch Chief. Jeanne is a 2007 winner of the National Wetlands Award for Education and Outreach. During her spare time she competes in ultra runs, teaches digital photography, and does volunteer work with the Maine Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club, and Riding to the Top Therapeutic Riding Center. She lives in an 1860 farmhouse in Windham, ME with her husband Larry and their 'rescued' animal companions Tux and Massey.

Jon Kusler, Associate Director, ASWM

Jon is a lawyer, writer, and educator with more than 35 years of experience with wetlands, floodplains and riparian areas. In addition to a law degree, he holds a M.S. in Water Resources Management and an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Land and Water Management from the University of Wisconsin. He helped found the Association of State Wetland Managers in 1983 and served as its Executive Director from 1990 to 2001. He received EPA's National Wetland Lifetime Achievement Award in 1990, the Gilbert White award in floodplain management in 1979, and the Society of Wetland Scientist's Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009. He has authored many books and reports concerning wetlands, such as *Our National Wetland Heritage: A Protection Guide*, *Regulating Sensitive Lands*, and *Wetland Creation and Restoration: The Status of the Science* (co-editor with Mary Kentula). He lives in an old farmhouse in Berne, New York with his wife Pat, two children (when they are home), many cats, and two lizards.

Leah Stetson, Writer-Editor, ASWM

Leah joined the Association as a writer-editor in fall 2006. She edits *Wetland Breaking News*, writes feature articles for *Wetland News* and develops content for ASWM's website and blog. A published poet and conservationist, Leah holds a master's degree in human ecology from College of the Atlantic. Before joining ASWM, she wore several hats—including a Smokey the Bear “Stetson” at Acadia National Park. Leah has over 15 years of nonprofit experience, with the last ten years devoted to conservation and natural resources. She volunteers with a local conservation commission and is a member of the Lakes Region Writers Guild. She likes to swim and explore local wetland preserves with her rescue dog, Sophie-Bea.

Steve Palmer, Project Bookkeeper

Steve has a B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Maine. Steve “re-tooled” after years in sales and has become a specialist for bookkeeping and tax preparations. He has worked for ASWM for six years. A flexible schedule has allowed Steve to donate some of his time to charity nonprofits. Steve and his wife, Dottie, live on a five-acre woodlot near Sebago Lake. They enjoy living in Maine with their Springer Spaniel, Jennie.

Laura Burchill, ASWM Staff

Laura is the office manager in the Windham office and has been with the Association since 2004. She is responsible for maintaining the membership information; assists with the many tasks involved in preparing for conferences and workshops; handles publication orders; as well as general office duties. She has 25+ years experience in graphic design and also works part-time for *Parent & Family*, a local publication. When not working, she enjoys spending time with her husband David, two teenagers, Chris and Stefanie, and dog, Jack.

Sharon Weaver, ASWM Staff

Sharon is the Publications Specialist and Webmaster for the Association in the Berne, New York office, where she has worked for the past 19+ years. Along with general office tasks, she works on the layout and design of Association publications, reports, and brochures. She helps coordinate ASWM workshops and symposia. She manages the ASWM website, which includes daily updates and prepares and designs new webpages. When she is not entertaining company, she enjoys some alone time with her husband, Ken, and grown children Karla and Pieter. She adores her cat and three dogs, who complete the family nest.

William Walker III, Environment/Technology Specialist

Will joined the Association as an intern in the summer of 2010 through the Environmental Finance Commission. He performs research, GIS and IT support tasks for the ASWM. He graduated from the Edmund Muskie School of Public Service, part of the University of Southern Maine in August 2010 and will start his Ph.D. program at Northeastern University in fall 2011. He earned his Master's in Community Planning and Development with a focus on Regional Development. In addition to his education, he has three years of experience working on a variety of planning and environmental issues including recycling programs, urban comprehensive planning, and school composting.

Shelley Hodges, Intern

Shelley started her internship at ASWM in June 2010 while a graduate student at the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service. She worked on two projects: the In-Lieu Fee Program Workgroup and the 401 Certification capacity building project. She holds a B.A. in English from the University of New Hampshire. She has also worked at a law firm in Portland, Maine for six years. During that time, she also escaped to Costa Rica to work at a butterfly garden and to Spain to nanny and teach pilates. Shelley lives in southern Maine and loves to be outside.



A wetland in Yellowstone National Park
Jeanne Christie photo